CLAIM AMENDMENTS

Claim Amendment Summary

Pending

- Before this Amendment: Claims 1-11, 13-15, 17-30, 32 and 33.

- After this Amendment: Claims 1-11, 13-15, 17-30, 32 and 33.

Non-Elected, Canceled, or Withdrawn: None.

Amended: Claims 1, 8, 9, 11, 15, 18, 19, 23, 27 and 30.

New: None.

Claims:

1.   (Currently Amended) A method implemented by a publicly-accessible (public) instant message (IM) service, the method comprising:

the public IM service receiving via a client application, a request from a user to connect to the public IM service;

the public IM service determining that the user is associated with a particular domain which requires a monitored connection between the user and the public IM service, wherein an IM gateway server provides the monitored connection; and

based on a determination that the user is associated with the particular domain, the public IM service redirecting the request to [[an]]the IM gateway server that is associated with the particular domain.

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2.   (Previously Presented)   The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the determining comprises:

the public IM service identifying a user ID associated with the request;

the public IM service determining a domain associated with the user ID; and

the public IM service determining that requests for connections to the public IM service from users associated with the domain associated with the user ID are to be redirected.

3.   (Previously Presented)   The method as recited in claim 1 wherein the redirecting comprises:

determining a redirection address associated with the domain, the redirection address being associated with the IM gateway server; and

transmitting a transfer command to the client application from which the request was received, the transfer command indicating the redirection address to which the request is to be submitted.

4.   (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 3 wherein the redirection address comprises at least one of an IP address or a domain name.

5.   (Original) The method as recited in claim 4 wherein the redirection address further comprises a port number.

6.   (Previously Presented) The method as recited in claim 1 further comprising:

the public IM service receiving via the client application, another request from the user, to connect to the public IM service, the request including an identifier that indicates that the request is being submitted from an IM gateway server that is associated with the domain; and

establishing through the IM gateway server, a connection between the public IM service and the client application.

7.   (Original) The method as recited in claim 6 further comprising:

the public IM service receiving instant message communications from the user through the IM gateway server; and

the public IM service transmitting instant message communications directed to the user to the IM gateway server.

8.   (Currently Amended) One or more computer-readable storage media having computer-readable instructions thereon which, when executed by a computer, cause the computer to implement the method as recited in claim 1.

9.   (Currently Amended) A method implemented by a publicly-accessible (public) instant message (IM) service, the method comprising:

the public IM service receiving a user request to connect to the public IM service;

the public IM service determining a domain associated with the user request;

the public IM service accessing domain-specific policy data associated with the domain, wherein the domain-specific policy data indicates which user requests are permitted to connect to the public IM service and which user requests are permitted to represent an enterprise associated with the domain;

in an event that the domain-specific policy data indicates that connection requests associated with the domain are not allowed, the public IM service denying the request to connect to the public IM service based on the domain-specific policy data.

10.   (Previously Presented)   The method as recited in claim 9 further comprising:

in an event that the domain specific policy data indicates that connection requests associated with the domain are to be redirected, the public IM service

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redirecting the request to connect to the public IM service based on the domain-specific policy data.

11.   (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

receiving at a <u>first</u> gateway server, an instant message (IM) service connection request from a user, wherein the connection requested is to a publicly-accessible (public) IM service<u>, wherein the first gateway server is implemented behind a first enterprise firewall, wherein the first gateway server is configured to communicate with a second gateway server, wherein the second gateway server is implemented behind a second enterprise firewall which is configured to prevent unauthorized direct access to sensitive enterprise data</u>;

<u>the first gateway server communicating with</u> the <u>second</u> gateway server ~~verifying~~<u>to verify</u> that the user is authorized to access the <u>first</u> gateway server;

<u>the first gateway server communicating with</u> the <u>second</u> gateway server ~~verifying~~<u>to verify</u> that the user is authorized to participate in public IM communications;

the <u>first</u> gateway server modifying the public IM service connection request to include data that identifies the <u>first</u> gateway server; and

the gateway server forwarding the public IM service connection request to [[a]]<u>the</u> public IM service.

12.   (Canceled)

13.   (Previously Presented)   The method as recited in claim 11 wherein the verifying comprises examining data stored in an enterprise policy and configuration data store.

14.   (Original) The method as recited in claim 11 further comprising:

determining whether the user is authorized to participate in point-to-point communications as may be enabled through the public IM service; and

in an event that the user is not authorized to participate in point-to-point communications, altering the connection request to include data that indicates that the user is not authorized to participate in point-to-point communications through the public IM service.

15.   (Currently Amended) A   system   comprising   at   least   one processor, at least one computer readable memory, the system configured to facilitate:

a publicly-accessible (public) instant message service configured to enable public instant message communications between two or more users, wherein the public instant message service comprises:

an instant message connect domain store configured to store domain names that identify domains for which instant message service connection requests are to be redirected; and

a dispatch server comprising a processor and memory, with instructions encoded on the memory, the instructions when executed by the processor directing the dispatch server to perform a method, the method comprising:

receiving a connection request, wherein the connection request represents a request submitted by a user through an instant message client application;

determining whether the connection request is being received via an instant message gateway server;

in an event that the connection request is not being received from an instant message gateway server, determining whether the connection request is from a user associated with a domain identified in the instant message connect domain store;

issuing an authentication challenge to authenticate the instant message client application from which the connection request is submitted; and

in an event that the connection request is from a user associated with a domain identified in the instant message connect domain store, issuing a transfer command to the instant message client application, the transfer command including a redirection address.

16.   (Canceled)

17. **(Previously Presented)** The system as recited in claim 15 wherein the instant message connect domain store is configured to store at least one of a domain name, an instant message connect enabled indicator, a transfer IP address, a transfer domain name, a port number, a managed namespace authorization enabled indicator, or an instant messaging ID/Key pair.

18. **(Currently Amended)** The system as recited in claim 15 wherein the public instant message service further comprises[[:]] a connection server configured to establish and maintain a connection between the instant message service system and the user through an instant message gateway server.

19. **(Currently Amended)** The system as recited in claim 15 wherein the public instant message service further comprises[[:]] a switchboard server configured to route instant message communication data received from and directed to the user.

20. **(Previously Presented)** The system as recited in claim 15 wherein the public IM service further comprises an enterprise-specific data log configured to store data associated with public IM communications directed to or from a user associated with a particular enterprise.

21. (Previously Presented) The system as recited in claim 15, further comprising an enterprise network that is separate from the public instant message service, wherein the enterprise network comprises an enterprise-specific data log configured to store data associated with public IM communications directed to or from a user associated with a particular enterprise.

22. (Previously Presented) The system as recited in claim 20 wherein the enterprise-specific data log is implemented as at least one of a database, one or more XML files, or one or more text files.

23. (Currently Amended) The system as recited in claim 15 further comprising[[:]] an enterprise instant message gateway server configured to manage public instant message conversations in which an enterprise user participates.

24. (Original) The system as recited in claim 23 wherein the public instant message service is further configured to verify that the gateway server is a valid gateway server associated with an enterprise with which the user is associated.

25.   (Original) The system as recited in claim 23 wherein the enterprise instant message gateway server is further configured to:

request a connection to the public instant message service on behalf of the enterprise user; and

route instant message conversation data between the public instant message service and the enterprise user.

26.   (Original) The system as recited in claim 23 wherein the enterprise instant message gateway server is further configured to generate a log of the instant message conversation data.

27.   (Currently Amended) The system as recited in claim 23 further comprising:

a second enterprise instant message gateway server, geographically distributed from the other enterprise instant message gateway server, the second enterprise instant message gateway server also configured to manage public instant message conversations in which an enterprise user participates; ~~and~~

<u>an enterprise directory configured to maintain data identifying at least one</u> <u>enterprise instant message gateway server through which public IM</u> <u>communications are to be routed for at least one enterprise user, wherein the</u>

enterprise instant message gateway servers are associated with enterprise users based on a geographical location of the enterprise user; and

an enterprise routing service configured to route a connection request from the user to the enterprise instant message gateway server or to the second enterprise instant message gateway server, wherein the enterprise routing service routes the connection request as designated by the enterprise directory.

28.   (Original) The system as recited in claim 27 wherein the enterprise routing service is further configured to determine whether to route the connection request from the user to the enterprise instant message gateway server or to the second enterprise instant message gateway server based on data that identifies a geographical location associated with the user.

29.   (Original) The system as recited in claim 23 further comprising a policy and configuration data store configured to maintain data that identifies enterprise policies to be applied when the enterprise user requests a connection to the public instant message service.

30.   (Currently Amended) One or more computer-readable storage media comprising computer-readable instructions which, when executed, cause a publicly-accessible (public) instant message service to:

receive a request to establish a connection with the public instant message service;

determine whether the request is being received through an instant message gateway server;

in an event that the request is being received through an instant message gateway server:

    authenticate an identity of the instant message gateway server;

    authenticate an identity of a client application through which a user submitted the request; and

    establish a connection between the public instant message service and the client application through the instant message gateway server; ~~and~~

in an event that the request is not being received through an instant message gateway server:

    determine whether the user is associated with a domain for which connection requests are to <u>be</u> redirected; and

    <u>determine whether domain-specific policy data is associated with the domain, wherein the domain-specific policy data indicates which user requests are permitted to connect to the public IM service and which user requests are permitted to represent an enterprise associated with the domain;</u>

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in an event that the user is associated with a domain for which connection requests are to be redirected and the domain-specific policy data permits the connection request of the user;

redirect the connection request to an instant message gateway server associated with the domain.

31. (Canceled)

32. (Previously Presented)   The one or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 30, further comprising computer-readable instructions which, when executed, cause the public instant message service to:

in an event that the request is not being received through an instant message gateway server:

in an event that the user is not associated with a domain for which connection requests are to be redirected, determine whether the user is associated with a domain for which connection requests are to be denied; and

in an event that the user is associated with a domain for which connection requests are to be denied, deny the connection request.

33. (Previously Presented) The one or more computer-readable media as recited in claim 32, further comprising computer-readable instructions which, when executed, cause the public instant message service to:

in an event that the request is not being received through an instant message gateway server:

in an event that the user is not associated with a domain for which connection requests are to be denied:

authenticate an identity of the client application through which the user submitted the request; and

establish a connection between the client application and the public instant message service.